

Planning Zoning and Housing Committee Of the RTM

Draft Meeting Minutes

Date: April 18, 2006 8:00 p.m.

Place: Employee Lounge Town Hall

Present: C. Bayne, D. Conologue, L. Fingar, M. Magida, J. Normile, A. Rycenga,
M. Sheehan, R. Stark, J. van der Kieft, R. Young

Absent: G.Grimes, T. Sickinger

Regular meeting of the Planning Zoning and Housing Committee of the RTM to discuss the following two items scheduled to come before the RTM at its April 24th meeting.

Town Plan of Conservation and Development

Chairman Rob Young explained that as the Primary Committee for this project, the PZ&H Committee can recommend its approval, approval in part, disapproval, or make no recommendation at all. He noted that regardless of the RTM's decision, with a two-thirds vote the P&Z Commission can override any decision made by the RTM. Nevertheless, it was decided that this is the Committee's opportunity to comment on and/or make recommendations regarding the Town Plan. For more than an hour several items from the Town Plan were brought up for discussion, with the Committee voting by consensus to make the following additional comments and/or recommendations:

1) Chapter 3 – Environmental Resources, Page 3-3, Bullet #7

The question arose as to why 25 percent was chosen as the cut-off for coastal site plan review of construction of, addition to, or modification of any structure. This percentage was deemed too high by many, and it was decided that more background on the regulation and why 25 percent was chosen would be needed.

(Note: 4/19/06 email from Chairman indicated that in a meeting between PZ&H Committee member John van der Kieft and Jeremy Ginsberg on 4/19, Mr. Ginsberg recommended that this item be dropped in its entirety).

2) That a study be conducted of Holly Pond dam, with a recommendation made for its remediation if damage is found.

There was some discussion as to which area of the Town Plan this should fall under, ie. Chapter 5: Regional Issues, Chapter 8: Parks Recreation & Open Space.

3) Chapter 4 – Traffic & Transportation

That the town lobby the State Department of Transportation to conduct a study of the intersection of Hollow Tree Ridge Road and the Post Road and whether a traffic light should be installed there.

4) Appendix A-4: Traffic and Transportation, Page 23, Item #5

Deletion of the proposal to eliminate the Leroy Avenue Connector. It was decided that the proposed reconfiguration of the eliminated roadway right-of-way to provide access to Frate Park would be too hazardous.

5) That the Town Plan highlight a greater need for walk-ways and non-motorized public transportation. It was noted that Appendix A8: Parks, Recreation and Open Space, Page A8-7 does mention bike paths.

6) Appendix A6: Housing, Page A6-6, Paragraph 4

That the conversion needed to allow the 100 or so units of on-site housing for workers at the three local country clubs, Noroton Yacht Club, the DCA and some of the local churches be formalized as soon as possible so that these units could be counted towards "Affordable Housing" as outlined in Section 8-30g of the Connecticut General Statutes.

7) Chapter 6: Housing, Page 6-3, Item #6

Not only should the feasibility of allowing in-law/accessory apartments be investigated, but that they should be considered to help the town meet its affordable housing goals.

8) Chapter 4: Traffic and Transportation, Page A4-21, Item #4

That a study be conducted near the intersection of the Boston Post Road and Noroton Avenue with regard to on-street parking. The Plan notes that on-street parking limits the directional flow roadway width to about 1-1/2 lanes in each direction, but makes no mention of restricting parking.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Town Plan with the above additional comments and recommendations, while acknowledging the excellent work by all who wrote and contributed to the Plan.

The motion received a unanimous vote in favor of this action; 10 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstentions.

Acceptance of a Gift from Fox Hill Builders to Construct a Comfort Station Facility at Cherry Lawn Park

Most Committee members thought the gift was a generous one, although concern was expressed on a few issues: whether the other parks in town will want one (parity), and whether the Darien Nature Center will continue to maintain its comfort station, which was part of its approval process.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the acceptance of the gift with gratitude, with the understanding that the original resolution remains in force with regard to the comfort station located inside the Darien Nature Center.

The motion received a unanimous vote in favor of this action; 10 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstentions.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m. with agreement to a Special Meeting on Monday, May 1 at 8 p.m.

(Note: meeting subsequently changed to Tuesday, May 2 due to availability of meeting facility).

Respectfully Submitted,
Carolyn Bayne
(substitute) Clerk